

but lack of space forbids a more extended notice of this important contribution, which is only one of a series of highly valuable reports by the same author upon the animals and plants obtained in the vicinity of Point Barrow. The Commander of the Expedition, P. H. Ray, First Lieutenant Eight U. S. Infantry, especially acknowledges the able and valuable assistance rendered by Mr. Murdoch throughout this eminently successful expedition.—J. A. A.

The 'Water Birds of North America'—A Few Corrections.—The excellent and exhaustive work on the 'Water Birds of North America,' lately issued by the Agassiz Museum of Comparative Zoölogy, is a model treatise as far as the labors of the authors whose names appear on the title-page could make it perfect; and for errors in quotations from others, chiefly compiled by the late Dr. Brewer, neither he, Professor Baird, nor Mr. Ridgway can be held responsible.

It is, however, an unfortunate circumstance that while so many are indirectly made contributors, they should have been unable to amend their notes when printed, as there is always new information accumulating, which more or less alters previous knowledge, especially in regard to habits of birds. It was probably impracticable to supply proof-sheets to all the naturalists quoted and still living while the printing was being done. In consequence, a large number of amendments and additions must remain for publication in other ways, the editors not having seen fit to add an appendix, as done with the three volumes of 'Land Birds.' The following corrections will be of interest, and relate chiefly to quotations from my own writings. I do not now undertake to give many additional observations.

In volume I, page 75, line 2, '*tule*' should be printed *tulé*, it being the Spanish or Mexican name of the giant rush, *Scirpus lacustris*.—not properly speaking a "long grass." In Utah it is spelled Tooele, the lake thus named being within the range of Spanish travel, but should be pronounced Too-ly, in two syllables.

Page 115, line 3, for 'sport' read spout.

Page 116, line 10. *H. niger* breeds as far south as Santa Barbara Island. See quotation on next page, line 8.

Page 117, line 22 from bottom, for 'Malashka' read Unalaska.

Page 146, line 19 from bottom, for 'California' read Caledonia.

Page 233, near middle, Dr. Brewer overlooked my article in Proc. Cal. Acad. Nat. Sc., IV, 3, 1868, where I stated this species to be "not rare at San Francisco Bay in winter." The same article would have furnished other facts on 45 species of birds, chiefly additional to what he did quote.

Page 298, line 12, for 'western,' read eastern.

Page 320, line 6. The young birds I caught were probably *Limosa fedoa* (p. 255), which are described as very similar to the young of *Numenius* when not half grown. It is my recollection, however, that old Curlews were shot also, possibly barren birds. On p. 312 he also quotes my notice of *N. longirostris* in the same locality, but no other collector has found it breeding there.

Page 358, line 18. My notes are not correctly quoted. The bird was hid in a hole or cave in the rock, and when alarmed flew out alighting on San Francisco Bay.

Volume II, page 7, *Nettion crecca*. Also found not rarely in California. I gave it in the 'Additions,' etc., in Proc. Cal. Acad. Nat. Sci. 1868.

Page 37. The Ducks shot by Dr. Heermann in summer in California, were more probably females of some other kind than of *Mareca americana*, as the latter has not been found breeding in the United States.

Page 38, line 5 from bottom, for 'Kansas' read Texas.

Page 39, line 10 from bottom, for '1.35' read 2.35.

Page 51, near middle and elsewhere, for 'Conalitos' read Corralitos.

Page 87, line 21, for 'west' read coast.

Page 118, line 2, for 'smaller' read summer.

Page 143. The Brown Pelican of the West Coast was fully described by me as a common summer bird as far north as Shoalwater Bay. Lat. 47°, in P. R. R. Rep't, XII, iii, 1859, but San Francisco is given here as the northern limit. Dr. Brewer not quoting the Report, as in several instances. The adult plumage obtained by me at San Diego does not differ from that of Florida birds, but the colors of bill, pouch, etc. differed from both the Florida and Lower California birds, being intermediate, and quite variable.

Page 147. The notes on *Phalacrocorax carbo* do not agree with the distribution given on p. 145. Nuttall gives it as a bird of the Northwest Coast.

Page 288. In my 'Additions to the Fauna of California' in 1868, not quoted. I mentioned *Sterna elegans* as obtained in San Francisco Bay.

Page 336. I published a notice of the occurrence of this bird in San Francisco Bay (Proc. Cal. Acad. Sc. V, 415, 1875).

Page 365, line 8, for 'gong' read gony. In line 12 is a misquotation, apparently contradicting the previous part of the sentence. The birds seen by me were near shore.

Page 371, line 6 from bottom, for 'Tagers' read Yagers (from the German Jäger, a hunter).

Page 390. A blackish species, agreeing closely with *P. stricklandi*, is found on the California coast in company with *P. creatopus*, and I supposed it to be the same bird in young plumage, just as the former is supposed by some to be the younger *P. major*. The only one I obtained was not sent to Washington, therefore is not referred to, and I saw no reason to consider it new. The wing was 12½ inches long (not 12), thus a little larger than in *stricklandi*, just as that of *creatopus* was ¼ inch longer than in *major*. The four named species should probably be reduced to one, and many similar combinations of species would be advantageous to the study of the water-birds.

Page 411. Mr. W. O. Emerson, of Haywards, obtained specimens this year at the Farallone Islands, California, of the size of *C. homochroa*, but in plumage approaching *C. melania*.

Page 424, line 18 from bottom, for 'Pueblo' read Pablo.

Page 428. A perfect albino, apparently of *C. holballi*, was received from the Alaskan coast by Mr. Gruber of San Francisco, about 1874.

Page 448, line 13, for 'file' read pile (that is, arrow).

Page 486. I published the occurrence of the *U. lomvia* (*arra*) in San Francisco Bay, in the Proc. Cal. Acad. Sc. V, 414, 1875.

Page 502. Although the authors quote me in regard to color of bill, they have omitted my notes on finding *B. hypoleucus* breeding on Santa Barbara Island in 1863, where its habits, as far as observed, were similar to those of *P. alvuticus*, quoted on p. 519.

Page 519, line 20 from bottom, for 'dying' read rising.—J. G. COOPER.

Stejneger's Ornithological Explorations in Kamtschatka.—Among the more important ornithological works of the year 1885, Dr. Stejneger's 'Explorations in Kamtschatka'* easily takes a very high rank, and, as regards North American publications on this subject, marks an altogether 'new departure,' it being the first work in which the classification and nomenclature of the (still unpublished) A. O. U. 'Check-List' is systematically recognized. On this point the author says: "The systematical nomenclature will be found to deviate not inconsiderably from the one usually adopted in the publications treating of the region in question. The reason is a two-fold one, for in *identifying* the birds I have been anxious not to lump together nearly-related forms, representative species, subspecies, local races, migrating-route races, or whichever they are termed, giving the separation the benefit of the doubt whenever there be a doubt, it being my scientific creed that this is the least harmful course. In *naming* the forms thus identified I have strictly adhered to the rules laid down by the 'American Ornithologists' Union.' For changes in nomenclature of that origin I am, therefore, only partly responsible, and eventual critics should not charge against me 'the pleasure of bringing forward' these changes, which are the necessary results of the consistent application of the only sound principle upon which a scientific nomenclature can be based. The systematical arrangement is that which I proposed in 'Science Record,' 1884, p. 155, with a few modifications" (p. 7).

From this avowal of principles and methods the reader is prepared for innovations, both in respect to nomenclature and the status of species and subspecies. Since many ornithologists are disposed to avow the anti-thesis of Dr. Stejneger's 'creed' in respect to the separation of closely allied forms, and to let the doubt weigh in favor of non-separation—both sides are obviously susceptible of argument—probably the ground here taken is too radical to meet with general approval. The work before us displays, however, a thoroughness of research, a critical sifting of records and diagnoses, and detailed exactness of statement that stamps it as in

* Results of Ornithological Explorations in the Commander Islands and Kamtschatka. By Leonhard Stejneger. With nine plates. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1885.—Bulletin No. 29 of the United States National Museum. Published under the direction of the Smithsonian Institution. 8vo., pp. 362, pl. 8 and map, and 7 cuts in text.